# A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, June 19. 1708.

I Have been harrass'd with Reproofs and Epistolary Corrections upon my Exclamations against the People's choosing *Tories*, and foretelling the Consequences of a *Tory* Parliament; and the Reason they give for it, not to give the World the Trouble of their impertinent Scribbles, is, that we are very well assur'd, there is a very happy Election made in most Parts of *Britain*, and therefore the People, who have shewn by their Precaution, their Diligence, and Zeal, that their Eyes were open, had no Occasion for so sharp a Reproof.

Now to this, Gentlemen, pray accept a short Answer, and I'll dismiss this long Story, and leave you all to the Issue of your own Doings, and to an old *English* Proverb, *Viz. To lie down in the Bed as you have made it.*

Have you chosen an honest, a *Whiggish* Parliament, a House full of Gentlemen, whose Sence, Parts, Integrity, Estates, and above all, whose Principles secure us, and assure us, that our Lives, Liberties, Government and Religion is safe in their Hands? *Happy be the Hour* for ye all, if it be true, and may he that wishes it otherwise die regretting the Disappointment; no Man can rejoice at it more, none more eagerly wish it than I, *tho' perhaps some may more easily be perswaded of the Truth of it.*

But,

But, Gentlemen, have I had no Cauſe for my Exclamations? Have I ſeen no Elections in *England*, *a la mode de Shock-Dog*? Have I ſeen none of you vote blindfold, and ſhut your Eyes wilfully? Have I ſeen no *Whigs* voting for *Tories*, and chooſing ſuch Men to truſt with their Nation, that upon another Occaſion they would not truſt with Half-a-Crown? Have I not ſeen it? —Indeed if I had not, I had leſs Reaſon, and You more, to ſpeak what has been ſpoken; but really, Gentlemen, I have more to ſay this way, than you imagine. I can aſſure you, I have not formed one Jeſt, one Allegory, one remote Simily, but has a Tale at the End of it; all I have ſaid has been acted ſomewhere, either in the Moon, *or ſomewhere elſe*; and I have not ſpoken ſo much without Book, or without Cauſe, as you may imagine.

Again, Gentlemen, I have not ſat ſtill at the *Coffee-Houſe* all this Summer, as ſome of you have done, forming Elections, and telling Noſes, and caſting up Parties over a Diſh of *Coffee*; but I have been among a great many of your Elections my ſelf: I have been an Eye-Witneſs to many of the moſt fulſome and lothſome Stories I have told you, I have ſeen the Poſſibility, ay and too much the Practice, of Men's voting implicitly, here for Ale, there for Influence, here again for Parties, and there by Perſwaſion: And GOD knows, I ſpeak it with Regret for you all, and for our Poſterity; it is not an impoſſible thing to debauch this Nation into a Choice of Thieves, Knaves, Devils, Shock-Dogs, or any thing comparatively ſpeaking, by the Power of various Intoxications.

Now, Gentlemen, having ſeen ſo much, and heard ſo much of your Follies, and knowing ſo much of the Conſequences of this miſerable Temper of our People, I think my ſelf juſtified before GOD and Man to tell you, That ſo far as theſe Practices are allow'd among you, ſo far you are ruining your Country, pulling down your Queen, ſelling your Liberties to *French* and *Jacobite* Tyranny; *for* by the Way I eſteem it all one: And far be it from me to fear the Reſentment of any Power, be it never ſo great, in a Truth ſo plain and ſo ſignificant as this. I tell you again, *Gentlemen Freeholders*, if you have choſen us *High-Flyers*, and *Tories*, Abjuration taking *Jacobites*, ſuch as I have been deſcribing, you have ſold your Nation, your Birth-right, your Children, to a Pack of Thieves, and ſacrific'd the Liberty and Religion of *Britain* to your ſordid, debauch'd Luxury and Covetouſneſs.

Never comfort your ſelves with ſaying it is not done, 'tis no Thanks to thoſe whoſe Hands have been up-lifted to bring it to paſs, and who have griped the Mammon of that Unrighteouſneſs, or ſwallow'd the luſcious Draught of a *Tory* Bribe; 'tis for opening the Eyes of the ignorant Criminal in this Affair that I write, and ſhall I tell you, theſe Criminals are but too many.

I have thought two or three times to expoſe ſome of our own Friends in this Caſe, who have not only ſo far abandoned their Cauſe and their Friends, as to vote for theſe wretched People, but who in a Body have ſet up *Tories* againſt *Whigs*, meerly to ſupport the Reputation of their Party: But as theſe are a new, and I doubt too fatal a Sort of People, who we have but lately found acting this Part upon the Stage; I am not over-haſty to cenſure them, but ſhall reſerve that Caſe to be ſpoken to more at large.

But we are ſure of a *Whig* Parliament, you ſay, *I wiſh you be* John, *ſays the Proverb*; and yet my Reproofs or my Reproaches are not the leſs juſt: For give me leave to tell you, Gentlemen, the utmoſt Endeavours have been uſed to make it otherwiſe, and this I muſt own, if you have a *Whig* Parliament now, I think, you may look upon that Intereſt as rivetted for ever; for never were ſtronger Struggles, never more Maſters of Enemies, or more Arts made uſe of to debauch Friends, and perhaps the laſt never with more Succeſs, to the Shame of their Judgment be it ſpoken.

How impoſſible is it for Human Art to prevent the Attacks made upon the Vertue of the poor People in this Nation? how ineffectual are all the Acts of Parliament againſt Bribery and ill Practices, while Men

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are buſie debauching the poor, ignorant, impos'd upon People, not near the Election only, or before the Teſt of the Writs, but really from the very End of one Election to the Beginning of another! The whole three Year is a Scheme of Bribery, Cant, Wheedle, Trick and Sham, and the forming and keeping up of Parties, is the Buſineſs of the reſpective Parties from one Election to another.

The Triennial Bill is a very good thing, and a Complication of Advantages are lodg'd in the Bowels of it; but I cannot but remark, that it has this fatal Conſequence in it, which all *England* feels, and *Scotland*, I doubt, will feel it; *Viz.* That the Certainty of a new Election in three Years is an unhappy Occaſion of keeping alive the Diviſions and Party-Strife among the People, which would otherwiſe have dy'd of Courſe, —Had the Elections to come been remote and uncertain, the Intereſt of this or that Perſon had been equally uncertain, and Men had not apply'd themſelves ſo much to the cultivating their Intereſt, and rivetting themſelves in the Opinion, either of People or of Parties.

I do not ſpeak this to ſuggeſt the Alteration, and I acknowledge, the Conveniences of that Law are in their Kind very many, and very great; but this at the ſame time is, the Diſaſter attends us with it, that this Honey has its Poiſon with it, this beautiful Roſe has its Prickle. This Certainty of the Return of an Election occaſions a conſtant keeping alive innumerable Factions, forming Parties, keeping up Differences, keeping on Foot Prejudices and Parties, even from Election to Election; inſomuch that it is a moſt juſt Obſervation at this time, that thoſe Towns, who chooſe no Parliament Men, live in much more Peace and good Neighbourhood, than others that chooſe; ſince in the latter the contending Parties are ever ſtrugling, they contend on every Occaſion, chooſing their Pariſh-Officers, their Recorders, their Magiſtrates, and every thing that has the leaſt Face of publick Concern; all runs by Parties, all eye the grand Election, are found upon that Intereſt, and have that Occaſion in View.

This is a ſad Truth, and I could appeal for its Confirmation to a great many Corporations in this Kingdom, and could illuſtrate it with melancholy Examples; but I forbear, becauſe as before, the other Privileges of that Bill go a great way to anſwer all the Inconveniences, and are what I would never have parted with.

Well, but we have gotten a *Whig* Parliament you ſay, *I do not ſay I ſay ſo, tho' I hope it*; but ſhall I ſay a Word or two on that Head. Firſt then, the *Tory* Party are horridly diſappointed, the *Jacobites* are defeated, and all their Party baulked; for nothing can be more certain, than they think they are of a moſt Glorious *Parliamentary Campaign* this next Year, and of carrying all before them, as their Grand Ally did the laſt Year, I mean the *French*.

But ſhall I tell you one thing, *by the way*, by our Foreign Accounts, we are in hopes this Cauſe may be decided in the Field; for I muſt own, the *Jacobite* Cauſe is tried there as much as any where. and let but any Body tell me, if this is not a Teſt of it, that this reviv ng of the *Jacobite* Cauſe in *England* has kept Time exactly with the reviving of the *French* Affairs abroad; they riſe together and they ſink together, and I doubt not but they will at laſt fall together. We have nothing therefore to do but to conquer, a Blow to the *French* is a Stab to the *Tory* Intereſt in *Britain*; and this might convince the moſt obſtinate Creature in the Nation, if he would but conſider of it, and ſhow him on whoſe ſide he is fighting, when he is eſpouſing the *High Flying* Party; whoſe Work he is doing, and how palpably he is carrying on the Intereſt of Popery, *French* Government, and conſequently his Country's Ruin.

A Victory in *Flanders* would cruſh the whole Party, make them turn from *High-Flyers* to Sneakers, make them hang their Ears and their Heads like a defeated Party; nay, it would make Converts, for it is with them as it is with the Generality of Men, who have no Principles to act them, *Viz.* That when their Cauſe goes down, they let it go and leave it.